REMARKS

The Final Office Action mailed April 3, 2006 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Specification

The specification has been amended in order to correct minor typographical and other errors in paragraphs [0024] and [0028].

Rejection(s) Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 1-2, 7-8, 16, 23-24, 29-30 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lee et al. (U.S. pat. no. 6,535,493; hereinafter, "Lee").

Claim 1, from which claims 2, 7 and 8 depend, reads as follows:

1.   A method for handling a roam request at a first switch, the roam request sent by a second switch and containing information about the client that is roaming to the second switch, the method comprising:

storing information regarding the client;

receiving the roam request after said storing;

determining if the first switch is a home agent for the client;

removing the stored information regarding the client from the first switch if the first switch is not a home agent for the client;

tunneling traffic for the client to the second switch if the first switch is a home agent for the client; and

sending a roam reply to the second switch.

According to the italicized clause above, the stored information is removed from the first switch if the first switch is not the home agent. The implication is that the first switch received the roam request regardless of whether or not it was the home agent. The distinction between home agent or not plays a role only subsequent to the sending. This is not the case in Lee. Rather, in Lee, the registration request is sent to an already-known home agent, and is never sent to a non-home agent. Even considering that the special case of claim 1 in which the roam request is sent to a home agent reads on Lee's sending the registration request to the home agent, the general case, which the language of claim 1 connotes and which must be accounted for, is not met by Lee. This is a clear distinction between claim 1 and Lee, and is indicative of a more fundamental difference between the inventive approach and the teachings of Lee which is beyond a mere obvious modification.

In addition, the italicized clause above requires removal of the stored information from the first switch if the first switch is not the home agent. The failure of Lee to teach this feature is acknowledged in the Office Action, which proceeds to minimize this failure by pointing to Lee's teaching of discarding datagrams that are intended for a mobile unit if the datagrams are sent by way of an AP that is no longer acting as a foreign agent. It is difficult to see how discarding datagrams that is essentially mis-addressed by way of a stale or obsolete foreign agent—how discarding such datagrams at the foreign agent—can suggest removing previously stored information about a client from a switch.

Further, the reasoning in the Office Action effectively requires a modification of Lee such that information about the client is removed from an AP if the AP is determined not to be the home agent. This, however, raises a major contradiction: as explained above, in Lee, a registration request is only sent to an AP if that AP is the home agent. Thus modifying Lee so that it is consistent with claim 1 is not possible, since claim 1 requires removal of the information, from the switch to which the roam request is sent, if that switch is determined not to be the home agent; but Lee, it will be recalled, never sends a request to an AP that is determined not to be a home agent.

For these reasons at least, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 1, and claims 2, 7 and 8 dependent therefrom, is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 9-11, 20, 31-33, 37 and 39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Rue (U.S. pub. no. 2003/0185172; hereinafter, "Rue").

Claim 9, from which claims 10 and 11 depend, has been amended to read as follows:

> 9.   A method for responding to client roaming at a first switch, the method comprising:
>   receiving a move request from an access point associated with the first switch; and
>   sending a roam request to all peer switches in the same mobility domain as the first switch; and
>   determining if the move request is associated with client roaming between two virtual local area networks (VLANs) serviced by the same switch by including said first switch in said sending.

Rue does not teach or suggest "determining if the move request is associated with client roaming between two virtual local area networks (VLANs) serviced by the same switch by including said first switch in said sending." Rue is directed to movements between different subnetworks and does not address the situation in which movement between two VLANs occurs. The passage in

paragraph [0045] to which the Office Action points is consistent with this, and relates to movement from one subnetwork (300) to another (310).

Claims 12, 15, 21, 34 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lee in view of Rue and Strachan et al. (U.S. Pub. no. 2004/0105440; hereinafter, "Strachan"). Claim 12, from which claims 13-15 depend, reads as follows:

> 12. A method for handling a roam reply at a switch, the method comprising:
> receiving the roam reply, the roam reply having information regarding a client that is roaming to the switch, the information not previously available at the switch;
> determining if the roam reply indicates that the handling of a roam request was successful;
> sending a reply to a corresponding access point indicating failure if the handling of said roam request was not successful;
> setting the switch as a Foreign Agent for the client if the handling of said roam request was successful;
> switching a router designated by the client with a default router for the switch if the handling of said roam request was successful; and
> sending a move reply to said corresponding access point if the handling of said roam request was successful.

As previously pointed out, the Office Action attributes two different, conflicting functions to the same passage in Lee, in order to meet two different elements of claim 12. The passage at issue is in col. 9, lines 57-6, which relates to a reply sent from the home agent to the foreign agent. According to the Office Action, this reads on the "receiving the roam reply..." element of claim 12. However, the Office Action also states that this passage reads on the "sending a reply to a corresponding access point..." element of claim 12. This position is inconsistent. The same passage cannot read on such different elements, and therefore Lee cannot be said to teach or suggest these elements. Neither Rue nor Strachan ameliorate this shortcoming, and for this reason at least, the obviousness rejection based on Lee, Rue and Strachan is improper and should be withdrawn.
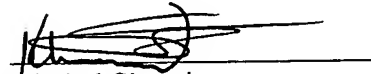
Conclusion

In view of the preceding discussion, Applicants respectfully urge that the claims of the present application define patentable subject matter and should be passed to allowance. Those claims that have not been specifically addressed in this Response contain at least some similar limitations as those discussed and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone call would help advance prosecution of the present invention, the Examiner is kindly invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number below.

Please charge any additional required fees, including those necessary to obtain extensions of time to render timely the filing of the instant Amendment and/or Reply to Office Action, or credit any overpayment not otherwise credited, to our deposit account no. 50-1698.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: 08/01/2006

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